

Feb. 29, 1940

Walter L. Drinnon  
Merlinton, Va.

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Chapter 4 - Section 4 - Part a.

The Drinnons were the first settlers in the Edrey Community. Thomas Drinnon, son of Walter Drinnon of Ireland, settled in Edrey about 1760. The Drinnon cabin stood on the bank near the present graveyard. A spring under the bank has always been known as the Drinnon Spring. Not far from the cabin was a favorite camping place for Indians, and many stone relics have been found here. Other proof of the site of this cabin was an old apple orchard, and one tree remains to this day, over a hundred years old and known as the Drinnon apple. This field is known as the "Old Orchard Field". A part of it belongs to W. L. Price and the other part to J. R. Gay.

Early records tell us that Thomas Drinnon was a soldier with General Lewis in the Battle of Point Pleasant. When he returned home, he found his cabin in ruins. His wife had been killed by the Indians, and his son Charles carried into captivity. He was so broken up over his wife's death and the fate of his son that he returned to the army and marched beyond the Ohio River.

At the close of the war he returned to his mountain home, but there were no ties to hold him, and he resolved to journey to the west, and there among savage tribes search for his lost son. So with his rifle he pushed out into the wilderness. A year passed and there were no tidings of him. His friends believed that he had fallen a victim of savage cruelty. The fact was that he had journeyed far to the Northwest and found his lost son in possession of a trader

near Detroit. The homeward journey was begun, and at last both reached home and lived many years in what is now Poshon-  
tes County.

Drinnon owned a large boundary of land, several thousand acres that extended from Indian Draft to Stony Creek. Drin-  
non's Ridge took its name from the old settler. The Drinnons  
left this section long ago and we know nothing of the descendants  
of these brave pioneers.

The settlers to follow the Drinnons were the Moores.  
About 1780 Robert Moore, Sr. moved to Edray from the Bridger  
place on Greenbrier River and settled on the Drinnon holdings.  
He and his boys opened up a fine farm and erected a two story  
brick dwelling---the only brick dwelling in the community.  
Robert Moore and his wife lived and died in the "brick mansion".  
He was born in 1780 and died 1858 aged ninety years. His  
grave was the first in the Edray Graveyard.

Robert Moore's farm was divided among his sons and one daughter.  
The names of the sons were: Isaac, James, William and Robert, Jr.  
Robert received the old homestead and lived there several years.  
In 1867 he sold the old home to J. W. Sharp.

Isaac Moore settled in the woods just opposite the present site  
of the Edray Church. His home was a hewed log house about six-  
teen by twenty feet, two stories high, shaved shingle roof,  
chinked and daubed walls, one door and one window in the first  
story. In 1911 a fine frame house was erected on the site of  
this old log house by S. B. Moore.

About 1861 Edray Community swarmed with soldiers on  
the march or in camp. Isaac Moore contracted camp fever and

as he convalesced he was seized by measles from which he died. He too was buried in the new graveyard by the side of his father.

Colonel John Baxter was an early settler in this community. He came here about 1800, and is the first member of his family about whom any definite information can be found. He was the first member of the Baxter family to settle in Pocahontas County. His home was at Sulphur Spring about three miles from the Drinnon cabin. He was the first Colonel of the 129th Regiment. In the organization of the county, he was a leader and he held a prominent place in the early history of the county. When the county was first formed, he administered the oath of office to the other members of the first court in 1822. For many years he was a justice of the peace and a member of the Pocahontas County Court. He did much in framing business papers and frequently adjusted disputes out of court. His library was the largest and best in the county, containing over a hundred volumes.

About this time there became a popular demand for a Constitutional Convention and the Assembly in 1827-28 passed an act providing that vote be taken upon the question. This resulted in a large majority in favor of the convention and that body assembled in Richmond, October 5, 1829. This was the most remarkable body of men that had assembled in Virginia since 1788. There sat James Madison and James Monroe, ex-presidents of the United States and many others renowned for their wisdom and eloquence. The body was composed of ninety-six members and of the whole number eighteen were from the region now embraced in the limits of West Virginia.

Among these was John Baxter representing Pocahontas County.

Other early settlers were the Harlows, Smiths, Duncans, and Duffields.

The Mirey Post Office was established about 1850 and was the first post office in Pocahontas County. When looking for a name, Mrs. Eliza Moore, mother of the late George P. Moore, being a great student of the Bible suggested a Bible name. She said, "Call the post office Mirei, leave off the ei and add ay making Mirey the name". (Numbers 21-33). The name Mirei means a fortress. In Joshua it is stated that Mirei is one of the fenced cities, and that may have suggested the name to Mrs. Moore, for at a very early date this little village was a fenced clearing. George P. Moore was appointed postmaster in 1856 by President Pierce. He was only sixteen years of age when he assumed this responsibility. He served as postmaster until 1885. William Scott was appointed postmaster under President Cleveland for some time, and then George P. Moore was appointed again and served until his death in 1923. His service made him the oldest postmaster in the United States. He served sixty-four yrs.

In the early days mills were of great importance and we find that the first mill was built by Robert Moore, Sr. at the head of Big Spring. This house was a hewed log building, two or more stories high, equipped with a twenty foot overshot water wheel and water trunk from the head of the spring. The inside equipment of the mill consisted of two sets of runners, both country made - one for grinding wheat and the other for grinding corn and clops.

The first saw mill of the community was built near the grist mill by Isaac Moore and got water from the same source. These mills were used for many years and this spot was the most important business center of the community.

The first store in Edrey was owned and kept by William Allen at the place where Elmer Poage now lives. Isaac McNeel, Amos and Henry Barlow, and George P. Moore had stores at this same location.

The first schools in the community were held in the settlers homes. The teacher received free board in the homes of his pupils and would spend a week in the home of one pupil and then move on to the next. The first real school house was near Mrs. George Barter's home. The house was a round log structure with clapboard roof held in place by braces poles. The fire place took up most of one end of the room. It was made of rough stone and the chimney was made of slate and mud. For light greased paper was pasted over the cracks. Seats were made of split logs, holes bored and pine put in for legs. The term of school was three months and the teacher's salary one dollar a month for each pupil.

The first church in the Edrey Community was built on Stony Creek and called Mamlin Chapel. It is a hewed log building, cracks chinked and daubed, shaved shingle roof, side galleries, and for benches long benches with slat backs. Some years ago the side galleries were taken out and the building coiled. The benches were replaced with chairs. This church was built about 1835 and is still in use.

History of Edray Community  
(by E. E. Moore)

Edray Community is bounded on the west by Stony Creek range of mountains; on the north by Elk Mountain, to the top of Slippery Hill on the Clover Creek road, then to the Bridger place on the Greenbrier river where Paul Sharp now lives; on the South by the top of river ridges, including the Fairview and Brush Settlements, to the top of Drinnon Ridge where the State road crosses and to Elmer Sharp's at the foot of Stony Creek Mt.

This community is about five miles wide where the State Road crosses, and ten miles long from east to west.

The Drinnons were the first settlers in Edray Community. Thomas Drinnon settled near the Edray Grave yard. There is some difference of opinion as to the exact spot where the Drinnon Cabin stood, but I feel sure it was on the bank just above the grave yard. A spring under the bank has always, since my earliest recollection, been called the "Drinnon Spring." Other proof is an old apple orchard, trees of large size, mostly winter apples, near the spot where the Cabin stood. My father Isaac Moore went to this orchard in the fall with the wagon for winter apples when I was a small boy, though large enough to pick apples from the ground. My uncle, Robert Moore, and his boys always called this field the "old orchard field," and it goes by that name yet. A part of this field belongs to A. H. Day and the other part belongs to William M. Sharp's heirs, all of which once belonged to Thomas Drinnon, first settler in this community. He owned a large boundary of land several thousand acres that extended from Indian Draft to Stony Creek. Drinnon's Ridge took its name from the old settler, an everlasting monument.

Drinnon's home was broken up by the Indians. His wife was captured and taken away and murdered somewhere in Elk Mountain. Charles Drinnon a brother of Thomas Drinnon, settled near Onota. He cleared a field which bears the name "Charley Field" which is now owned by Anderson Barlow.

The Drinnons all left this country many years ago. I remember seeing James

back, door in one end

prison a member of this distinguished family. I think the prison was west to the northwest part of this state.

Robert Moore, my grandfather, who was captured by the Indians (see S. T. Price's History of Beekmantown for a full account of this capture). Robert Moore, Sr. once lived at the Bridger place, and reared his family there. My father, Isaac Moore, was born and raised there. One brother, Andrew, fell from a tree and was killed while other members of the family were stirring off a kettle of sugar. About 1820, Robert Moore, Sr. moved to Edroy and settled on the Grisson holdings. He and his boys opened up a fine farm and erected a fine two story building in the Community. I believe the lumber that went into the house was eased with the whip saw as at that time there was no water power saw mills. The broad ax was extensively used in getting out all heavy timber for buildings. Robert Moore and his wife lived and died in the brick mansion, and were buried in the Edroy Grave yard. He was born in 1768, died 1838, age 90 years. His wife was born 1771, died 1855, age 84 years. These graves were the first in the Edroy Graveyard; Robert Moore's real estate was divided with his boys and one daughter. The names of the sons were Isaac, James, William and Robert Jr. Robert received the old homestead, lived there many years and sold to J. W. Sharp about 1869 for seven thousand dollars. That included the upper part of the place, now owned by Isaac Sharp's heirs. I want to say just here, there was an old house stood about half way between the old brick house and the gate at the road. I think the old settler built and occupied this house while the brick house was being erected. When I was a small boy, elections were held in the old house. There was no ticket or ballot used. The Commissioner or "Conductor of Election" asked the voter, "Who do you vote for?"

My father Isaac Moore, settled in the woods where I now live. Father's house was a hewed log house, about 16X20 ft; shingle roof, chinked and daubed walls; one door and one window in the first story, and some in second story. The porch was on the side and stairs went up from the porch.

The soil of Edroy Community is productive. The upland is largely limestone, naturally sod, with the blue grass when sod is taken off. The flat land below the

-- with slot backs, door in one end

...which is well adapted to such as the ... and so good for ...  
and better for farming when improved; produces well and less liable to wash from  
heavy rains.

As to the timber, this community has been covered with all kinds of hard wood,  
base wood; some spruce high on the mountains and hemlock along the streams. Some of  
the most valuable timber is black walnut, ash, cherry, red oak and white oak, a  
great deal of which has been cut and shipped. Other hardwoods are Chestnut oak,  
some black oak, pink oak and sugar. There is some yellow pine on the flats.

Edroy Community has some of the best water in the state. Both limestone and  
free stone. There are many bold springs around the foot of the mountains. Always  
flowing, never dry, namely. At Elmer Sharp's, E.K. Sharp's and also a sulphur  
spring at E. K. Sharp's, a bold spring at the Cochran place, at A. G. Devine's  
head of Big Spring, now owned by the Bank of Marlinton and sufficient to run a grist  
mill with twenty foot overshot water wheel. Other bold springs at Mrs. M. K. Sharp's  
G. W. Mann's and Brinnen Spring at Mrs. J.W. Price's at Edroy. John D. Gay owns  
head of Indian Draft. There are many drilled wells in the flats all good water.

Some of the first schools were taught on the old farm houses. One among the  
first, if not the first, was in an old house near Mrs. George Baxter's home. The  
house was a round log structure, clapboard roof, held in place with pine poles.  
The fireplace took up most of one end of the house. It was made of rough stone.  
Chimney made of slate and mud. Now, for light, paper was pasted over cracks and  
greased to let in the light. Other cracks in the building were chinked and daubed.  
Seats were made of split logs or poles, holes bored and pins put in for legs. The  
term of school was about three months. The salary was one dollar per scholar a  
month. Writing was done with quill pens. The teacher boarded with the scholars.  
My father Isaac Moore, taught at this school when a young man. The first schools  
were called "Open Schools." Everyone spelled and read aloud.

The first Church in Edroy Community was built on Stony Creek and called  
Hawlin Chapel. It is a hewed log building. Cracks chinked and daubed, shingled  
shingle roof, side galleries, seats, --long benches with slat backs, door in one end



of building, elevated pulpit in other end, two small 12 light windows on sides. Some years ago the side galleries were taken out and the building called. Benches were taken out and chairs put in. This church is still in use and was built in 1835; as the records show it was deeded July 4, 1835.

Edrey Church was built in 1868 E. E. King was the contractor and builder. Contract price above foundation \$700.00. For this work Lakin and Peters furnished about twenty thousand feet of lumber from their mill at Clover Lick, delivered at the Gay Biding; which is now the Fair Grounds, for ten dollars per thousand white pine lumber. Everything summed up, all told, the Edrey church cost \$2032.25.

Edrey Post Office was the first post office in Edrey Community.

When looking for a name, Mrs. Eliza Moore, mother of the late George F. Moore being a Bible reader, suggested a Bible name and said "Call the post office Edreilf". Leaving off the el and adding ry making Edrey the name of the first post office. This office was established about 1830. As soon as Geo. P. Moore was of age, he became post master and continued to be until his death in 1922. He was the oldest post master in the U. S. A.

From Pocatong Times ---Nov. 4, 1926

Counties

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_ W. Va.

Title: Edray District Pocahontas CountyAuthor: Kella F. YeagerStatus: Complete Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_ Length: 856 Words

Editor: \_\_\_\_\_

Contents:  fairly complete account of Edray District Pocahontas County. Gives location, boundaries, surface, drainage, first settlers, description of first mills, school, post office; early churches & ministers; story of massacre of Drennen family.

Source: \_\_\_\_\_

Consultant: \_\_\_\_\_

Reliability: \_\_\_\_\_

File: \_\_\_\_\_

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Of those mentioned as the pioneers of the district, several were soldiers with General Lewis in the battle at Point Pleasant and among them were Thomas Drennin. He was the first settler on the land where Edray post office is located. Soon after he built his cabin home, it was attacked in his absence by the Indians, who killed his wife and a woman named Smith and carried his son into captivity. When Mr. Drennin returned home and beheld his home in ruins and his beloved wife still in death and thought of his son perhaps reserved for a worse fate, his heart failed within him but a few days later he repaired to Fort Union and volunteered in the army then concentrating. He accompanied it to Point Pleasant, participated in the battle and in the march beyond the Ohio.

At the close of the War he returned to his mountain home but there all ties for him were severed and he resolved to journey to the west and there among savage tribes search for his beloved son. On the eve of his departure on his hazardous mission his neighbors gathered to bid him God-speed. Then with his rifle he pushed out into the wilderness. A long year passed away and there was no tidings of him for there were none to bring them and his friends believed that he had fallen a victim to savage cruelty, but not so; he had journeyed far to the north-west and found his son in the possession of a trader near Detroit, Mich. The homeward journey was begun and at last both reached home and lived long in what is now Pocahontas County. Drennins Ridge, now owned by Mrs. Alice Robertson, keeps ever in memory the name of the brave pioneer, Drennin.

*Rilla G. Granger*